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Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 IO-13 ACDA-12 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05
H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01
SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 /084 W
----------041946 031144Z /15
R 021635 DEC 77
FM USMISSION USBERLIN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5785
INFO AMEMBASSY BERLIN
AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY PARIS
USMISSION USNATO

C O N F I D E N T I A L USBERLIN 3060

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PGOV, WB, BQG, AKB
SUBJECT: SPANDAU LOCK

REF: (A) STATE 282241, (B) USBERLIN 3007, (C) BONN 19543,
(D) BONN 18975, (E) BONN 19327

BEGIN UNCLASSIFIED

SUMMARY: BK/O ON SPANDAU LOCK ARRANGEMENT WAS ISSUED ON 30 NOVEMBER. ARRANGEMENT WAS SIGNED 1 DECEMBER IN EAST BERLIN. SENAT MADE BRIEF STATEMENT AT SIGNING CEREMONY. GDR MADE NO REPEAT NO STATEMENT AT CEREMONY. END SUMMARY

1. DECEMBER 2 DER TAGESSPIEGEL REPORTED ON SIGNING OF SPANDAU LOCK ARRANGEMENT. WE HAVE NOT YET RECEIVED FORMAL REPORT FROM SENAT BUT BELIEVE TAGESSPIEGEL ARTICLE, GIST OF WHICH FOLLOWS, IS ESSENTIALLY ACCURATE.

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2. TAGESSPIEGEL REPORTED THAT SPANDAU LOCK ARRANGEMENT, NEGOTIATIONS ON WHICH BEGAN IN 1969, WAS FINALLY SIGNED ON 1 DECEMBER IN EAST BERLIN. SIGNING FOR SENAT WAS SENATSRAT MELSHEIMER, DIRECTOR OF WATER AND NAVIGATION CONTROL IN THE SENAT HOUSING ADMINISTRATION, AND FOR THE GDR SOMMER, DIRECTOR OF THE WATERWAYS AND INLAND

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NAVIGATION ADMINISTRATION OF THE GDR MINISTRY OF TRANS-
PORTATION. AT THE SIGNING CERMONY, MELSHEIMER GAVE THE
STATEMENT AGREED UPON BY THE BONN GROUP (REFTEL D). SOMMER
MADE NO STATEMENT.

3. TAGESSPIEGEL ALSO REPORTED COMMENTS MADE BY SENAT
SPOKESMAN SOETJE. SOETJE ANNOUNCED ISSUANCE AND
MADE KNOWN CONTENTS OF ALLIED BK/O (WITH TEXT AS PER REF-
TELS A, B AND E) OF 30 NOVEMBER. HE ALSO ENUMERATED FIVE
ADVANTAGES OF THE ARRANGEMENT: (A) HIGHER PROFITABILITY
OF FREIGHT TRANSFER; (B) FACILITATION OF PASSENGER SHIPPING
SINCE IN THE FUTURE DEMURRAGE WILL BE AVOIDED; (C) SMOOTHER
TRAFFIC SINCE TWO LOCKS WILL NO LONGER EXIST NEXT TO
EACH OTHER; (D) CONTRIBUTION TO THE LONG-DELAYED COM-
PLETION OF THE EAST-WEST WATERWAY SYSTEM FROM THE DNIEPER TO
THE RHINE; (E) COMMERCIAL BENEFITS TO DEPRESSED CONSTRUC-
TION INDUSTRY IN BERLIN.

4. TAGESSPIEGEL REPORTED THAT THE GDR NEWS ORGAN ADN
DESCRIBED THE ARRANGEMENT AS A STEP TOWARDS THE NORMALI-
ZATION OF RELATIONS BETWEEN THE GDR AND THE BERLIN
SENAT. TAGESSPIEGEL ALSO REPORTED BERLIN GOVERNING MAYOR
STOBBE AS HAVING WELCOMED THE ARRANGEMENT AS A STEP FOR-
WARD TOWARDS FURTHER PRACTICAL ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE BENE-
FIT OF THE CITY. CDU LEADER LUMMER, IN LONDON, CRITI-
CIZED ARRANGEMENT ON GROUNDS IT WOULD BENEFIT THE GDR
FINANCIALLY. SOETJE RETORTED TO THE PRESS THAT NOT ONE
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PENNY OF THE DM 30 MILLION TO BE SPENT ON WIDENING THE
LOCK WILL GO TO GDR FIRMS. HE SAID THAT ONLY WESTERN
FIRMS WILL BE CONTRACTED TO DO THE WORK. THE MONEY WILL
BE PROVIDED BY THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT. (COMMENT: THE
GDR WILL HOWEVER, BENEFIT FROM THE BETTER LOCK TO SERVICE
ITS OWN TRANS-BERLIN BARGES, AND WILL OF COURSE COLLECT
THE HIGHER FEES FOR THE LARGER BARGES WHICH WILL BE ABLE
TO PASS THROUGH THE NEW LOCK.)

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5. COMMENT: THE CONCLUSION OF THE ARRANGEMENT WENT OFF
SMOOTHLY. WE DOUBT THAT THE GDR WILL REACT TO OUR BK/O
ALTHOUGH IT REMAINS POSSIBLE THAT THEY MAY DO SO WHEN
THE BK/O APPEARS IN THE BERLIN OFFICIAL GAZETTE SEVERAL
WEEKS HENCE. GEORGE

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NNN

*** Current Handling Restrictions *** n/a
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Disposition Action: RELEASED
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Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
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